

SLCC Journal

San Leandro Computer Club

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SLCC JOURNAL

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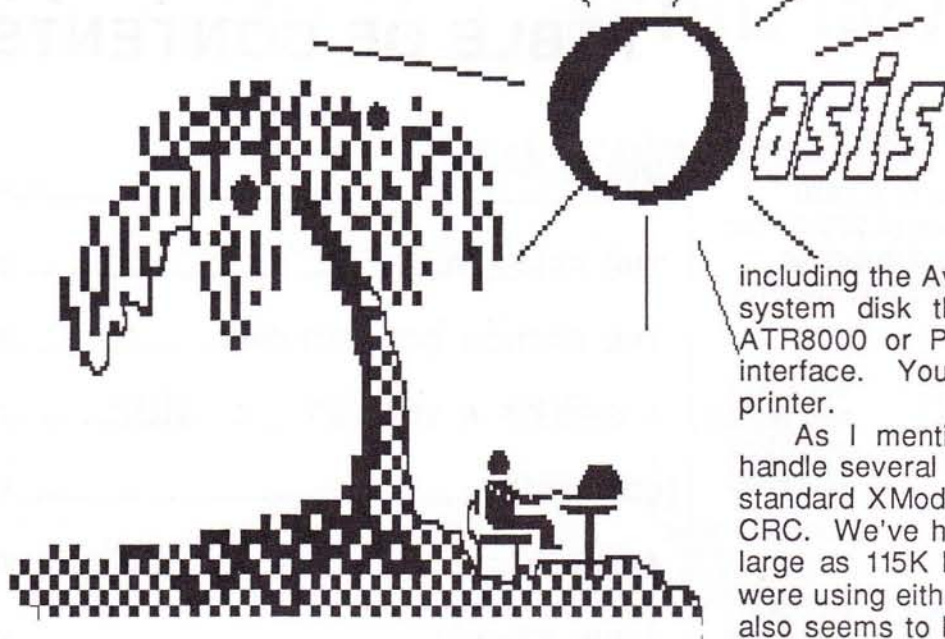
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REVIEW BY MICHAEL SAWELY
S.L.C.C. VICE PRESIDENT

The San Leandro Computer Club is now operating new software at our BBS, The Key System. The change has enabled us to offer XModem, YModem and CRC file transfer protocols for the ST owner. The BBS program we are now using is called OASIS. It is an all machine language program written by Mr. Ralph Walden of the Eugene ACE group using MAC/65 by OSS. You may purchase the program by writing him at:

Ralph E. Walden
1821 Jefferson St.
Eugene, OR 97402

You may also wish to call his BBS at 503-343-4352 (it is a PC Pursuit call and supports 300, 1200 or 2400 baud calls).

OASIS is designed to operate on any Atari 8-bit machine with at least 48K of memory. To get the most out of OASIS, you will want to use SpartaDOS and an XE computer. This will allow a number of files that are accessed frequently to be placed in RAMdisk. This not only includes text files such as menus, but also the password file and any message bases that you might fit. If you have an R-TIME-8 Cartridge and SpartaDOS, OASIS will get the time and date for you on booting and keep more accurate time than if you are using the built in clock registers.

You will be able to use any modem that has the Hayes command set and verbal responses

including the Avatex. There are handlers on the system disk that allow you to use an 850, ATR8000 or P:R: Connection as your modem interface. You can also choose to not use a printer.

As I mentioned above, OASIS is able to handle several file transfer protocols. They are standard XModem and the newer Ymodem and CRC. We've had successful transfer of files as large as 115K bytes without error when callers were using either 8 or 16-bit computers. OASIS also seems to handle PC Pursuit just fine when transferring files. This includes the delays normally encountered when PCP is under heavy use. OASIS is able to lock out several classes of callers. You can set OASIS to accept only ATASCII callers if you like. You can force new passwords to be entered only from the keyboard if you want to have a password by mail only system. You can accept only high access callers if you need to limit traffic on exceptionally busy days. Both 40 and 80 column users will be pleased with the display produced by OASIS. There is a text formatter built in so that text files will have word wrap set depending on the screen width set by the caller. The screen width for each caller is held in the password account so this information need not be entered on each call. There is also a mode for FLASH users. This will allow color in numerous prompts.

OASIS is able to support up to 8 message bases plus true Electronic Mail. Any E-Mail messages that might be waiting for you when you log on are automatically displayed. You can also view them again from the main menu as long as you did not delete them the first time through. After entering a reply, the original message is re-displayed so you can delete it if you wish. There is a "read new messages" command that is very nice. By pressing the star key [*], a caller is shown a list of those message bases that have new messages. The caller can then pick a message base to read from that list and reading starts off at the first new message. Once that base is read, the caller is then shown the list again and can choose another base to read. All the commands normally found in a

(Oasis continued)

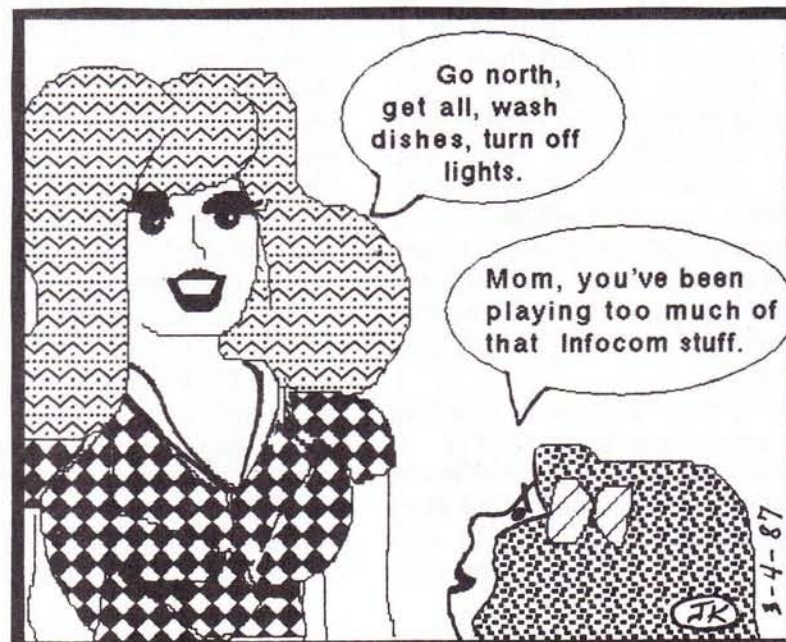
good message reader are there including the ability to switch directions. You are also able to download files from the message reader, but more on the later.

The file transfer sections are very nice as well. You can have up to 4 different download sections plus a text section online at once. You will want to use one for 8-bit downloads and another for 16-bit downloads. The files are listed in alphabetically order and files are selected by number reference rather than having the caller type in the name of the file. You can also download a file from the main menu as long as you already know the file name and also the sub-directory it is on. You can also set the subject of a message as a drive number, sub-directory and file name. If a caller presses [Q] at the end of such a message, OASIS will then offer the file for downloading. When combined with the "read new message" command, you have a very nice method of announcing new or especially important files. There is a file maintenance utility available to the Sysop while OASIS is operating in the local mode. This utility is quite complete so you should rarely need to take the BBS down for file maintenance. There are also commands available for changing various default conditions the you initially set. With all these nice features, one might think this is an almost perfect BBS program for the 8-bit Sysop. Sorry to say this is not quite true yet. The message editor seems to be lacking a few commands and also will take some getting used to before you will feel comfortable with it. The commands are limited to Abort, Save, Goto line number and

List message. We are told that a "replace string command" is in the works. That will help out a lot since you currently will need to re-type an entire line if you make a mistake and don't catch it before going on to the next line. It would also be nice if there were insert line and delete line commands.

Another part of the editor that has a lot of callers confused at first is that a lone [RETURN] on a blank line is the signal to drop out of the editor and display the available commands. Since a lot of folks like to separate paragraphs in this way, we wonder if slash commands as the first characters on a new line could be used instead. This might not be possible since OASIS tries to reformat the message according to the screen width of the current caller and looks for control-A to insert a [RETURN] so if you want to start off a new paragraph then you will want to hit ctrl-A or a space and then a [RETURN]. We've found that certain places in OASIS take longer to reset when a caller drops carrier than others. OASIS will ALWAYS reset, but "eventually" seems to be a good adjective here. Since the modem has to be told to answer a call with an "AT" command from OASIS, there is no chance of another caller getting in when OASIS is off thinking about what it will do next.

That should about do it for a first look at OASIS. It offers a lot of features, hasn't crashed in the month or so that we've used it, and is very fast, especially if you make wise use of a RAMdisk. Finally, we're very glad to say that you can get technical assistance and updates from the author's BBS! ●



Cartoon idea from RIACE 10/86

THE FREEZER

-- TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR MEMORY

by Bob Woolley

There is one upgrade that can be applied to an Atari XL/XE which is near and dear to my heart.... extra memory (256K). Many programs that are only OK when run from a disk drive come alive if you execute them from memory. The PaperClip spelling checker is a good example of this. If you have a 256K machine, the dictionary will load completely into memory and will search a list of words instantly. There are also programs whose capacity is increased tremendously by the 256K upgrade. (PaperClip, a word processor, will hold 112,000 characters vs. AtariWriter's 20,000 or so).

Great stuff, but a few complaints. How do you use a RAMdisk with a program or DOS that is not written for them?? Also, when you turn off the power to a 256K memory chip, the data that is stored in it does not disappear in a few hundredths of a second as it did with the older and less efficient 16K and 64K devices. The operating system, which controls the power-on and reset sequences, only checks a few bytes of memory to determine if the power was just turned on (the locations would be garbage), or if you had hit the [RESET] key (the locations would equal specific values). If, after powering off and then on (in order to re-boot your system), those bytes have retained their data, the system may branch through a warm [RESET] start, instead of taking the proper path through cold (power on) start. This forces you to allow enough time to elapse after power-down for those key addresses to lose their data. A repeat of power off/power on isn't going to help unless you wait the required interval (like 10 to 15 seconds...). This waiting around is very annoying - didn't you get this extra RAM to save time??

So?? This is nothing new to those of you that have expanded systems. How do we fix it??

Relief arrives as a small hardware modification that allows you to force a cold start and boot the system with the [RESET] key (which will normally produce a warm start and

no boot). With this circuit installed, you can re-boot your computer without turning off the power and losing the data in the extended memory banks.

This means that you can install a RAMdisk, load it with data and then re-boot the system from the RAMdisk.

Using a menu created for this purpose, programs that do not support a RAMdisk - even a game, can be run - if you can force a coldstart without turning off the power. (Anyone want to write the menu for this??)

Also, you could be operating with a RAMdisk, boot a different program, run for a while, and then re-boot the original program with the RAMdisk memory intact. And, of course, you don't have to wait for the memory to blank out after you turn the power off. (A warm start is cooled down to a cold start any time you wish..... hence, the FREEZER.)

This is accomplished by making the computer think that you have changed the status of the cartridge, either removed one that you were using, or plugged one in where you had not had one before. During [RESET], the operating system checks the cartridge status since the last power on. If it sees that the status has changed, it executes a cold start and re-boots the computer. This upgrade allows you to change that status when you press the FREEZER switch (the one you will add). This means that if you hold the FREEZER switch down, push [RESET] (and [OPTION] if you don't want BASIC), and wait until the screen goes black (off), you will get a cold start. If you hold the FREEZER switch down too long and the screen restarts before you release it, you can just push [RESET] alone to cold start.

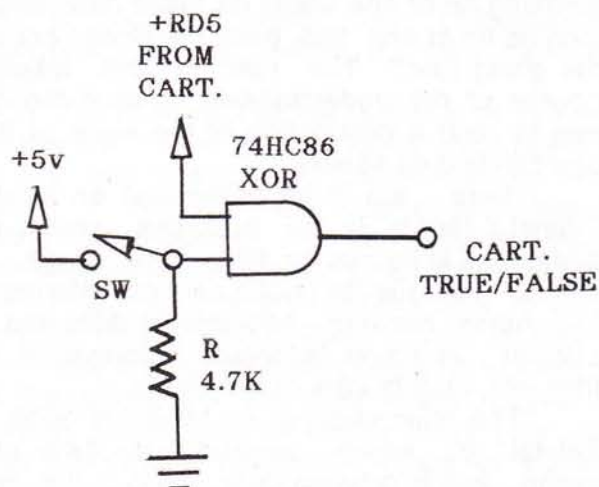
Accidentally hitting the FREEZER switch while you are running will lock your computer, but as long as it is not active when you [RESET], it will not FORCE a cold start. You may get one anyway if your program is designed to produce one, so mount the switch in a protected spot. A little practice will get you a cold start every time.

Installation requires some soldering and cutting, so don't try this if you haven't had

experience. Anyone who is willing to write a menu could probably get me to do their XL for them...

You will need a 74HC86IC, a small push button switch and a 1/4 watt resistor between 1K and 30K. Take your 1200XL, 800XL or 130XE apart and locate the GTIA chip (1200XL=U19:800XL=U17:130XE=U17).

You need to isolate pin 11 of the GTIA from the rest of the circuit by cutting the wiring on the printed circuit board. The 130XE requires two cuts and an added wire since the pin is between two points that you would like to keep connected. The normal circuit is: pin 14 (RD5) of cartridge - pin 8 of MMU - resistor to ground - pin 11 of GTIA. In that example, you could cut the wiring to pin 11 and not remove any of the connection points from the circuit except pin 11. In the 130XE, pin 11 is between the cartridge and the MMU, so you have to restore the wiring from cartridge to MMU after cutting out the pin.



1200XL: cut the trace on top of the board just to the left of Q4. (MMU is U14)

800XL: cut the trace just below pin 11 on the GTIA chip (U17). (MMU is U3)

130XE: cut the trace on top of the board just below pin 11 of the GTIA chip (U17). Also cut the trace on the bottom of the board right next to pin 20 of U17. Add a wire from the pad near the last cut you made (near pin 20 of the GTIA chip) to pin 8 of the MMU chip (U3). This added wire restores the circuit between the cartridge and the MMU.

ALL MACHINES: the added circuit is 1/4 of a 74HC86, which is an exclusive-or circuit. Wire pins 4,5,7,9,10,12, and 13 to ground. Connect pin 14 to +5v. Pin 1 goes to pin 8 of the MMU and pin 3 to pin 11 of GTIA. Connect a 1/4 watt resistor (1K-30K) from pin 2 to ground. Finally, mount the push button (normally open) switch on a clear area of you case, and wire one side to +5v and the other to pin 2 of the '86.

...REBOOT YOUR COMPUTER WITHOUT TURNING OFF THE POWER AND LOSING THE DATA IN THE EXTENDED MEMORY BANKS.

That is all that's needed. If you want to restore your machine to normal, solder a wire between pin 11 of GTIA and pin 8 of the MMU and remove the added IC and switch.

Well, it looks like it will take you longer to read this whole thing than it will take to build it. Just take your time and ASK FOR HELP if you aren't sure!!

<Uh, oh... do I have to open up my computer again??>

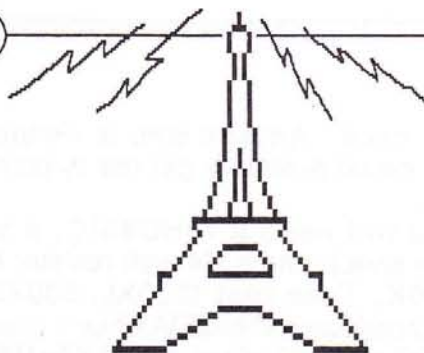
Yep!! May be a good idea to install MORRAM (from Dec. 1986 SLCC JOURNAL) AND FREEZER at the same time and on the same board. (Takes two ICs - and maybe you should leave a little extra space for.....?)

Please consider the consequences of attempting any hardware modifications to your Atari. The intent of the Journal is not to entice you to destroy your machines...Ask for assistance if you are not experienced in electronic constuction.

Ed.

The French Connection

Minitels in France
written by Lois Hansen
S.L.C.C. Treasurer



We like to think of ourselves here, especially in California, as being leaders in computer applications and development, but there is one field in which the French have us (and the rest of the world) beat: telecommunications. By beat I mean the number of people who use telecommunications daily relative to the whole population. According to an article I read in the Jan 2-6, 1987 edition of *Le Nouvel Observateur*, a weekly magazine kind of like *Time*, "France has become a large-scale telecommunications laboratory, with a density of terminals far surpassing that of other countries, and which the rest of the planet is observing with stupefaction."

In France, two and a half million French people use telecommunications daily because they were given terminals by the phone company to use instead of phone books! Incredible as it sounds, the PTT (Postes, Telephone and Telegraphie) decided to do this because they wanted to keep the phone factories busy and cut down on the high cost of paper to make phone books! It's hard to imagine how they can make dumb terminals and keyboards cheaper than phone books, but I guess they do only have to make them once instead of every year. People can still choose to have the paper books, but the afore-mentioned two and a half million have chosen to have the Minitel terminals installed next to their phones. That's out of a population of 55 million, in which 29 million are phone subscribers. (I might add that there are 20 million radios and 19 million TV sets, so we can assume that 20-25 million represents the highest possible number of households...it's really probably more like 14 million, if you count 4 people to a household. These statistics are from the 123rd edition of *The Statesman's Yearbook*, 1986-87.) The authors do admit that an estimated 30 to 40% of the Minitels live in closets, so that we're really talking about (say 65% of 2.5 million) 1.6 million

Minitels working every day. The authors of this article claim that these numbers exceed the number of CompuServe and other communication service users in this country, relative to our population. I am only reporting on this article, not doing a research paper, so we will have to take them at their word for now.

The fact that I am comparing the Minitel to CompuServe gives you a clue that the Minitel is not limited to the phone book. Indeed, the authors applaud the government's decision to make this new technology a part of the constitutional right of Freedom of Speech by promulgating this policy: "Anyone can broadcast anything he or she wants on these new lines, as long as he or she has paid the phone company the going rate." The rest of this article will consist of my understanding of what the going rate is and a description of the kinds of things one can find on Minitel.

There are three "channels" on Minitel. Teletel 1 (3613) is for business communications, and accounts for 10% of the usage. Teletel 2 (3614) is for public service information, like home banking, educational drills and simulations, or travel schedule information, weather, etc. It gets 22% of the usage.

The main channel on Minitel is 3615, or Teletel 3, which accounts for 68% of the usage, and is growing daily. 3615 is the home of the CB or chatting groups, as well as all the "private sector" small businesses, from ordering food from the grocery store to paying someone to talk dirty to you! In other words, you pay the service provider (separately), as well as the phone company, by the minute. And this part has me confused, as various parts of the several articles seemed to contradict each other. What I think happens, is that if you can show bills to the phone company for x number of minutes paid to a third party, the phone company then reduces the rate you must pay them for those minutes. The rates are as follows, based on B of A quote of 5.78 francs to the dollar on March 3, 1987:

Teletel 1 (business) \$1.28/hour; .02/minute

Teletel 2 (public serv) 3.84/hour; .06/minute

(French Connection continued)

Teletel 3 (private) 10.24/hour; .17/minute,
unless rebate -6.40 3.84/hour; .06/minute.

It's interesting that the rebate (of 5/8 your commercial receipts) makes 3's rate the same as 2's, but that the businesses get the biggest break at all times! (So what else is new!!)

It was further estimated that the average user at the end of 1986 spent \$16.63, or 3.6 hours on Teletel 3 per month. The average

*" France has become
a large scale
telecommunications
laboratory "*

user was further described as belonging to the upper class (27%), or the middle class (46%), between 25 and 35 years old, and slightly more likely to be male than female.

There follows a list of 25 things you can do on your Minitel besides find phone numbers: (this includes all three channels)

1. Read your daily horoscope.
2. Consult ANIMATEL about your pet's symptoms.
3. Consult VOYAGEL regarding tickets and lodging reservations.
4. Read any of several newspapers' news services on-line.
5. Call TELEMARKE before 10A to order food delivered in time for dinner.
6. Send e-mail to your government representatives. Check their voting records or daily schedule.
7. Home banking
8. Flea market

9. Help wanted by job type and/or location
10. Reserve hotel rooms via RIFOTEL.
11. Consult PAT, a directory of spas and thermal baths.
12. Consult APICTEL, learn when various herbs will be ripe for picking in your area. (the French like Homeopathie!)
13. Consult SM to keep from eating poisonous mushrooms!
14. Diagnose yourself on AK, an AI "doctor".
15. Look up what AK says you've got on MEDNAT (natural medecine...I told you they're into this)
16. Drill and practice schoolwork on EAO.
17. Play games on FUNITEL, DEFITEL or PLJEU.
18. Solve a scriptural argument on DEXTEL Bible database.
19. Check the traffic on the freeways.
20. Look for menu ideas on VATEL.
21. Calculate your income tax on CALIR.
22. Try your hunches on JB (!), the stock market simulation.
23. Send messages to extraterrestrials (!!!) on AL33, which translates them into something and sends them through the radiotelescope in Nancay!
24. Check the weather forecast.
25. GABRIEL will give you suggestions for topics of prayer.

And this list is not exhaustive...just from their "Diary of a typical day on-line." I don't know... I'm not a subscriber to any of our services. But some of you may be reading this and weeping!

A GEM of a VIP

Vip Professional GEM version 1.0
Review

by Chuck Amaral Jr.

I finally received my GEM version upgrade of VIP Professional a couple of months ago and at NO COST, I should add. After sending in my original disk with a letter stating my view on charging me for my upgrade and the letter they had sent me saying that they would send it to me at no cost, the long and battle for the GEM version was over. If you are a registered owner of VIP Professional and bought it before the package said "TEXT VERSION" on it, you should send all of the above to IDS Marketing 26510 John St. Unit 3, Markham, Ontario, Canada L3R 2W5 and they will send your update to you at no cost. If not, just follow the instructions inside the box to get your update. First of all, let me tell you what VIP Professional is. VIP is now a GEM based Lotus 1-2-3 clone, a full function spreadsheet of 256 x 8192 cells and hundreds of commands to do just about anything to a spreadsheet that you may ever want to do. Second, VIP is a database to search and sort your data with up to 256 fields. Third, a graphics program to visually display or print your data. Last, is the powerful macro language of VIP, allowing you to create automation programs to all the features of VIP with a two key command or user defined menu. With the macros, you can also create custom application programs in VIP Professional. With the speed and graphics power of the Atari ST and Lotus 1-2-3 version 1A compatibility, I feel this is one of the most powerful programs of it's type on the ATARI ST computer.

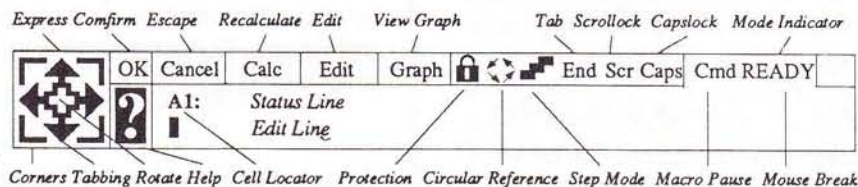
AT FIRST LOOK

At first look, you get the GEM VIP program, a graphprint program, a logo program, an IBM font program (to change ATARI screen font to IBM style font for greater IBM compatibility), demo templates, sample macro templates, a revised Lesson One of the manual with new specs for the GEM version....

On boot up, the GEM 'face shows 13 rows (15 rows on monochrome) instead of the 20 rows that you have on the text version. This makes room for the GEM windows and some modification may be needed on your old templates (especially if you use a lot of screen prompts and windows). Although the scroll bars are very sensitive, getting around the work sheet with GEM windows and speed is nice - zipping through hundreds of rows at the slightest touch. Clicking on the shaded area of the bars page up, down, left, and right, 13 rows at a time (15 rows on mono). When you create a window to view data in a different part of the work sheet, you can size it, scroll through it, and even enter data in your VIP window, instead of a set view as in the text version and in Lotus 1-2-3. This gives you more control and ease of manipulating your work sheet. The control Panel has been changed slightly(see Fig. 1). With all the status icons and function icons, you can click on such items as "cancel" for ESC, "ok" for RETURN "calc" for calculation, and so on.

MOUSE OR KEYBOARD COMMANDS

VIP's "/" commands can be use through the keyboard or by the mouse in pull down menus



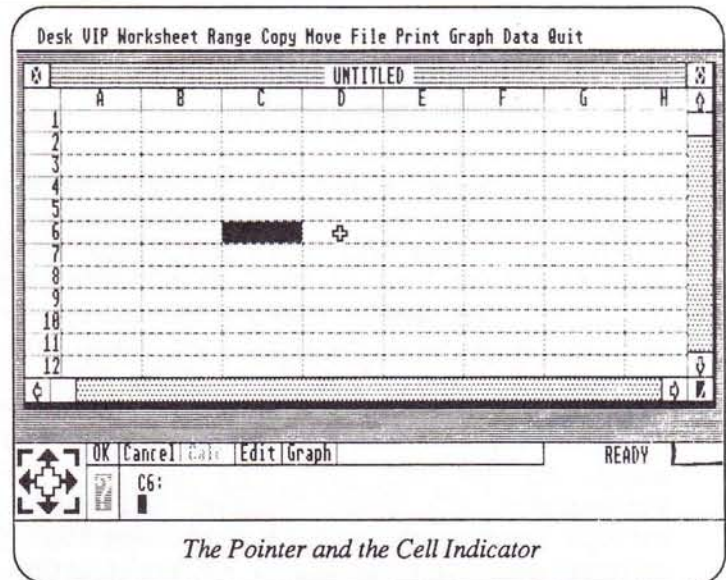
Icons in the Control Panel

anytime in the session, but once you start with a "/" command from the keyboard, you must finish the menu sequence or esc out of it to return to the mouse. When using the pull down menus, you just point and click on the function. When it comes time to hit RETURN, just click the right mouse button. You can do any operation in VIP through the mouse (except macros - you still have to use the arrow keys for user defined menus and two key commands to run macros). You can name ranges by dragging boxes around your cells and name columns and rows by simply clicking on the row or column identifier. Sizing columns is a breeze now, just click on the column divider and drag it smaller or larger. This saves a lot of keystrokes. Copy and move are made easier by just clicking on the command, clicking on cell(s) with data, and then clicking on destination.

SOME IMPORTANT SPECS

GEM VIP calculates using very fast floating point math routines - number crunching 30% faster than the text version. This is great for large spreadsheets with a lot of calculations and formulas. Macros run very slowly now since the screen has to refresh every time you complete a command. This slows down your macro processes by 30%-40%, which makes it very frustrating to work with.

You can now name a file as "AUTOVIP.WKS" and when you first boot the program, VIP will look for the file and automatically load it for you. Multiple windows allow viewing a work sheet, window, and graph all at once on the screen. And, the graph will update automatically as you enter data to your work sheet. All the views have full GEM control so you have a powerful desktop to work with. VIP now has a sparse matrix mode which only saves the data cells and not the entire work sheet, including blank cells. This conserves a lot of memory to give you bigger spreadsheets and databases. It is recommended that you have at least 1 meg in you ST and try to avoid using desktop accessories, as the program eats up about 350k of memory. Printing has been handicapped and now prints very slowly, about half the speed of the text version. The GEM version prints at about the speed of an IBM running LOTUS 1-2-3. The print spacing and sets for reports seem to be off, making it hard to layout for the printer. The graphprint program is the same, and it now includes a Cannon laser driver and GEM installed printers.



GEM VIP only uses .WKS files instead of .NAT and .WKS files, which will make it easier to use LOTUS templates. It will still read .NAT files from the text version, but the GEM version will only save in WKS. The data cells now only hold 70 characters instead of 79. This will only present a problem for people using long formulas or using templates created with Lotus or the text version of VIP. The problems with print and macro operating speed will be fixed in the soon to be available update of the GEM version 1.0, which should be ready by the time you read this article. Plus, the Screen updating and scrolling will be smoother and faster, with improved functions such as mouse control on user defined menus and more. Look to the VIP SIG for info on the newest GEM update. ALSO, a beefed up text version will be out soon, called the "POWER USER" version, which IDS marketing refers to as GEM VIP without the mouse?

CONVERTING FILES

To convert files from the text version: First load your text version Files into the GEM version, Then, save it through GEM VIP and reload it again. If that gives you problems, load the template into the text version and save it as a WKS file (hit alternate and undo to toggle from NAT to WKS). Load the WKS files in GEM, save it, then load it again and that should do it. If not, OH WELL ! For LOTUS files, just load ,save, and load again. All of these procedures convert and save the files to VIP and the sparse matrix format. Good Luck.

(continued on next page)

(continued from previous page)

GEM AND TEXT

VIP Professional, I feel, is a more flexible program now and the program I wanted when I purchased it a year ago. Mice in VIP took me a while to get the hang of, but I have learned the benefit of it and love it. Users of the text version will find it a hard transition and some may consider it more of a down-grade than an upgrade, but if you learn and understand the use of GEM in VIP, I think you will find it a great asset. As for the first time user to VIP Professional, it's great. Pointing and clicking through commands is easier than remembering all those slash commands and keystroke series. The only handicap to new users is that they won't be as familiar with the slash commands, making the macro language harder to understand and use. With the update of the GEM version, VIP Professional is now a great addition to the library of the ATARI ST computer, especially when the new GEM update is ready. Now all I need is for VIP Technologies to add a REAL TIME word processor to VIP Professional and I could throw out all my other databases and word processors with mail merge pains.

THE VIP AND BUSINESS SIG

If you would like to learn more about VIP Professional and other business application programs, come to the SIG, sponsored by the S.L.C.C. and run by myself, which meets on the fourth Tuesday of every month. Even if you are an experienced user of business programs, maybe you can help us out or even learn something new. For Info, call (707) 446-4600 or messages only (415)632-1367.

Chuck Amaral Jr. (The Magician)
Compuserve I.D. 72416,274

Crank up the code generator....
Plug in the coffee pot !

The SLCC Programming Contest
has begun !!!

EDITORIAL

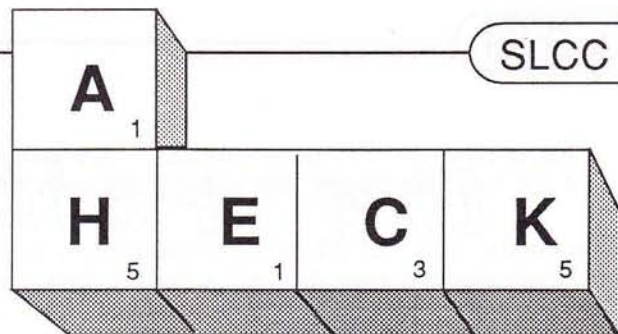
Little Things Hurt The Most ...

All of us 8-bit users might as well face facts - Jack Tramiel has managed to save our systems from joining those of TI, Coleco, IBM (Jr.), and scores of others. Most of us moan and groan when Super Goodie Software releases a mouth-watering, "hot and deep" title for C64 and Apple, while Atari 8-bit is: maybe later, maybe never. How long do you think a VIC-20 owner will have to wait? So, thank you, sir - you have done us all a favor.

Of course, this was not accomplished by magic, or a very rich Uncle, but by a rather draconian reduction in costs. Many of the excesses of the Old Atari were rightfully banished, as were some of the good, but expensive, practices. The toll-free help line was an unusual philanthropy on the part of the company, particularly in light of the manual (?) provided with the computer. Now, only a memory, the phones have been disconnected and the concept abandoned. The helping hand lives on, in the local User Groups that continue to thrive across the country, but the drain on Atari's resources has been cut down to a reasonable level. Alan Alda no longer interrupts our favorite TV programs and the four color documents that were the norm, now sport a less expensive style. All these changes are accepted with various degrees of woe by the survivors, but the deepest wounds seem to result from the Little Things.

Marked only with a faded, handwritten sheet, and open only a few hours each week, the door was the entrance to All That Was Atari. Shelf after shelf of Home Filing Manager and Pac-Man packages, mixed with Atari Ashtrays and T-shirts. Sold at prices that could be beat at many mail-order stores, the magic of the place lay in standing in the middle of the greatest collection of Atari products ever assembled. Everything you had ever heard of was there; just to browse through it all took many trips. Closed if the young clerk were sick, now it seems to be permanent. The Atari Company Store is no more. Ah, we knew her well, , , the Little Things hurt the most.

REW



ST REVIEW: WORD FOR WORD
A COMPUTER CROSSWORD GAME
BAYVIEW SOFTWARE, APPROX: \$33

BY JENNIE KLIEWER

"Your turn!" my husband announced gleefully from across the room. He moved away from the computer so I could take my turn. As I approached the monitor, my eyes stared at the screen in which he had scored 50 points by making the words, ah and heck, in one move. A little voice in my head rattled "why do I play this game with him!!! He always beats me." But of course I enjoy the challenge so I continued to play making my own triple word score.

WORD FOR WORD keeps score for you which is one part of the game I never did enjoy. That is just one of the many handy features in the game. You can have one to four players. "One" plays against the computer and you set the time limit that the computer has to take a turn which also is an effective skill level. I usually give it 9 seconds for a medium level.

There are actually two programs to load; one is the game and the other is making your own board. When you choose to make your own, you can choose number of letters for a player, distribution of letters and how many points each letter is worth. The board can be as small as 3x3 squares or as large as 15x15. You pick the exact places you want double or triple letter scores. Its truly a Scrabble player's heaven. I started out making elaborate shapes for boards but quickly discovered that you can't make very many words on them so I went back to more conventional square shapes.

When viewing your own letters, you can shuffle them as many times as you wish. There is a clever method for using blank letters that I will let you discover. Approaching the end of the game it is easy to "click" on GAME INFO and find out how many letters are left. I highly recommend WORD FOR WORD for the entire family. ●

This review of Pawn may surprise you !

EXCERPT FROM FIREBIRD
REVIEWED BY JIM MILLER, PAC

When Pawn first came out it looked like the game of the century. The graphics are great, but I feel they are the high point of the game. It is all down hill from there!

Pawn has a unique feature which lets you pull down pictures and you can turn the graphics on and off. I didn't because it was the only thing I was enjoying. Pawn can understand a great deal of what you say. You can type in entire sentences. Pawn also has on-line hints. You need to type in an encrypted message and it will give you a hint. Again some of the author's sarcasm sneaks in and the answer is sometimes worthless.

The game is protected so you cannot back it up without a copy program and there were no instructions on whether it goes on a hard drive? You can also turn on the printer -- Pawn has a good buffer so the printer can keep up. The size of the text can be changed for those with poor eyesight. Pawn also works on a monochrome monitor.

You're in a land called Kerovnia. You find yourself with a bracelet on and it will not come off. If you are looking for a plot in this game the bracelet seems to be it. I even read the manual and it is just a poorly written story about a poor land that has been "had" by a wizard of sorts.

To the South is a red line that you can't cross. You spend the whole game trying to get rid of the nasty bracelet so that you can find out what is over the line.

What about the dying forest? Again another hole in the plot. And so what if you vote? Increase your points. So what? But what does that have to do with the story line? You get the Princess back home! So what? She just runs off and leaves you. As for the castle, don't plan to ever go in there. If you do, you will just get tossed out on you ear.

The story line is just a twist of sarcasm and slaughter. Yes, slaughter! Are you willing to kill off ten scared hobbits so you can save yourself to get to another room?

The above is just a list of the holes in the plot. The solutions to the problems in this game are rarely logical and rarely do they help to solve real problems that are going on in this land. ●

See You at the Faire

Will the SLCC grab the attention of the West Coast Computer Faire crowd again this year? If our club president, Bob Barton, has his way the crowds will be pushing their way in to get a look at the goodies at our booth. Bob has swung the largest space for a user group, so he has kept busy trying to fill it up with the latest hardware. Realizing, that as this is going to press, some of the folks that will be showing off their wares at our booth are still tinkering with their brain child's and not totally confirmed, I'll attempt to reveal who and what are supposed to be there.

David Small will be trying to steal the show with a disk drive for the ST that will run Mac software. This is one of those not fully confirmed items, but if it does come to rest on our table, reserve your space in front of it early.

Then for you audio visual nuts, we have in ring number two the chaps from Navarone. They will be showing off their new digitizers for the ST. Already we have club members thinking of bringing along a disk to the Faire in hopes of returning home with a picture of themselves to play around with. Navarone has confirmed, so you might see yourself at the Faire.

I.C.D. will have their one meg. MIO board for the 130 XE for us to look at along with an 80 column card, to compare with the one that should be showing up with the boxes full of surprises from Atari Corp. More on those boxes later.

We hope to see the Boss System demonstrate their new operating system for the ST that is geared for business applications. We should be looking at new software as well as the ROM chips.

Astra Disk Systems will be displaying their BIG D double sided, double density disk drive for the 8-bit and a 20 meg hard drive for the ST with a built in double sided floppy drive.

Then on the "maybe" side of the ledger we have the creators of Publishing Partner, who are responsible of course for the new look of this journal that you are reading.

And what about those surprise boxes from Atari? what we are hoping for of course is a

Mega ST and one of those PC clones, and ... well you'll just have to come to the Faire.

Oh, by the way, you'll find all of this exciting stuff and the loyal SLCC gang at the booths, number 2142 and 2144, real close to one of the food stands. See you there.

Frank Kliever
assistant editor

8-Bit Disk Library Update

This month we are releasing Turbo Basic XL and Graph All as a special addition disk. This disk will be in addition to the regular floppy of the month. Turbo Basic is from Holland and was released to the public domain a few months ago. The reason for the delay in getting it to you was that we were waiting for the English versions of the programs to be released. On the disk, you will find the Turbo Basic program along with the Compiler and Runtime programs with documentation. If you could not come up with the \$40 for OSS's Basic XL then for \$5 this is the disk for you. In many cases Turbo Basic XL is faster than Basic XL and it is still compatible with ATARI basic.

On the flip side of the disk is GRAPH ALL, which is a public domain graphing utility much like B/GRAPH from Batteries Included. It lets you design and print bar graphs, pie charts, line graphs and more. It will also allow you to make a printer driver for your printer if it is not Epson compatible. All in all this disk is one of the best values in the club library.

Also be on the lookout for a special West Coast Computer Faire games disk. All the above disks will be available at the Faire, so if you are there, stop by and pick up your disks early.

James Moran
8-Bit Disk Librarian

KYAN PASCAL

for the Atari 8 bit,48K+
BY MICHAEL SAWLEY
SLCC Vice President

Our April 7, 1987 main meeting will feature guest speakers from KYAN SOFTWARE INC. of San Francisco, publishers of KYAN PASCAL. We are also expecting David Foster, one of our club members, to demo a few graphics programs he has written using Kyan Pascal. Kyan Pascal conforms to the ISO standard for Pascal compilers and is designed to run on any Atari 8-bit computer with at least 48K of memory. You can use most any DOS including Atari DOS 2.x, MyDOS or SpartaDOS.

The manual is large, complete and informative. It is set up as a tutorial so that even if you have never used Pascal before you can start programming right away using the many sample programs, general comments, logic explanations, and advanced topics as a guide. (OSS should take note here and improve their Action! manual to assist the beginning programmer.)

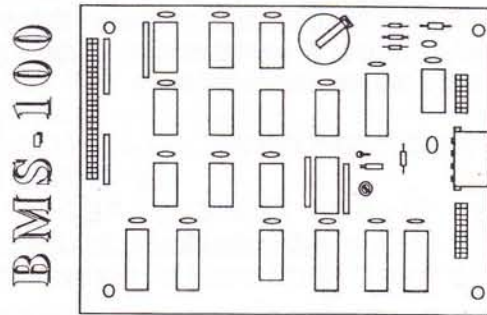
The disk packaged with the manual is not copy-protected (so it is easy to move the software into RAMdisk or onto a hard drives) and has all the files necessary to start programming in Pascal. These include an editor, compiler and assembler. There are a number of "include" files that support non-standard Pascal procedures special to the Atari. Among these are SOUND, PLOT, and STRING manipulation. There are "TOOL KIT DISKS" available that will greatly speed development of your own programs. Such topics as screen management, keyboard control, DOS functions, loading character sets and binary files, HiRes graphics, Player/Missile support, Windowing, Curves and 3 Dimensional Images. All these and more can be used royalty-free in programs you develop.

Kyan also publishes a bimonthly newsletter, "UPDATE." It is intended to provide subscribers with technical information, programming tips, bug reports, upgrade information and new

product announcements. You'll be sent a complimentary copy once you send in your registration card. Their "satisfaction or your money back" guarantee is one of the best in the software industry, especially when you consider they are giving you a disk that is not copyprotected. I just hope the Atari community is mature enough for this enlightened approach. For further information or ordering you may contact them at:

KYAN SOFTWARE INC.
 1850 UNION STREET, #183
 SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94123
 TEL: (415) 626-2080
 MCI: 298-0892 CIS: 73225,450

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SLCC DISK OF THE MONTH

April will be the month to remember for years to come. The Dynamic Duo have outdone themselves this month - read on !

No amount of persuasion could produce the source of these programs. The Dynamic Duo are well versed in the noble practice of "protect your sources !" and evidently have pledged their fortunes and honor to that end.

First, is a selection of the usual outstanding PD software available for the Atari:

- Battery Backup - Text instructions for constructing a fail - safe power supply for your BBS or sensitive data application.
- Rassilon Chess - From ANALOG magazine. Play chess through your modem with another human. "Best game in a long time"
- Shrink and Shrink XE - Data compaction utilities to save you space on your disk files.
- Potluck - A hilarious adaptation of the classic Monopoly theme. A great multi - player game; fun for both adults and kids, alike !!

NOW THE GOOD STUFF . . .

- Midas - THIS IS THE SLEEPER OF THE DECADE !! Originally developed by a software house to "port" 6502 code between different

systems, this underground jewel works too well. The developer is gone, but this utility has been used by the D/D (u know who) to create a bootable Atari disk through a modem from APPLE or C64 software ! This three pass, de-compiler was designed for "C" coded systems and will even partially correct screen differences between the systems. So? What DOES it work on?? Not much ... except a certain company has coded a new "hot " combat program that is not available on the Atari (starts with a G...). No need to be satisfied with just the submarine and jet fighter, MIDAS will generate an Atari version for you that is 80% operational (sound is nowhere, so hum to yourself... But the graphics are great and almost all of the controls work !!). Check This OUT on your favorite Wish List !!

- DateDOS - Adds Time and Date function to DOS 2.0 or 2.5. Datestamps all files when written to assist you in sorting out all the versions of PGMVER12.BAS that drive you crazy the next day. Has been used on Midas, above, to show creation date - April 1, 1987

Late reports from the task force assigned to the 16 - bit DOM indicate frenzied activity and the possibility of at least SIX great PD disks - all packed with the latest games and utilities.

(At 350K per disk? We won't see Frank for a week! Ed.)

BIG CHANGE Those of you who have looked at the back cover of this JOURNAL probably overlooked a big change. For a long time the club has been suffering with a too small Post Office Box. Changing our box number is a very big deal due to the many members, clubs and organizations that we deal with on a continuing basis. In order to make the change a bit easier the executive Board has elected to obtain a larger P.O. Box and also retain our present one. What does all this mean to you! If you are a member probably not much, if you are a club that we exchange monthly newsletters with it means your mailing list must be changed. Please note that the P.O. Box number is now 1506 and the zip code for this box changes to 94577-0374.

MARCH MINUTES

GENERAL MEETING 3-3-87

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 PM by president Bob Barton. Roll call of officers; all officers present. Announcements: the club has been assigned booth numbers 2142 and 2144 for the West Coast Computer Faire. The ICD company famed for their Doubler chip, Sparta DOS and now their MIO board for the 8-bit machines will have a representative at our booth to demonstrate their latest equipment. During the Faire ICD will offer a 15% discount on the new MIO board to SLCC club members.

Software chairmen Mark and Cliff demonstrated the Floppy of the month which has a great new menu to display disk contents. A few of the many programs on this months Floppy are; Diskmaster, a disk editor and Superkey, Keith Ledbetters keyboard macro program both with full documentation. In addition, Thief, Slither, Krazy Caterpillars and Chain Reaction, all games.

John Russell showed his recently acquired MIO board which according to him worked well. John also demonstrated an ATARI 1055 disk drive. About 200 of these 3.5" drives were made by ATARI in 1984 but they were never produced for sale to the public.

Program Chairman Dick Scott introduced Jeff Johannigman and John Manley from Electronic Arts (EA) as tonights speakers. Jeff first talked on EA, what they were and why the decision was made some time back to no longer support ATARI computers with their software. Jeff also stated that EA had seen the error of their ways and that they were firmly back in the ATARI camp. Some of the games that were demonstrated include Lords Of Conquest and Mail order Monsters for the 8 bit machines and Arctic Fox and Sky Fox for the 16 bitters. In closing Jeff and John held a short question and answer period and donated three of their new ST games to the clubs raffle.

After a short break president Barton requested that the club start a programing contest open to all club members. There should be a \$75 first and \$25 second place prizes for each 8 and 16 bit programs. The contest will be open for

three months. Any type program and any type of language will be permitted. The following motion was made by Moran and seconded by many. MOTION: That contest as outlined be held. Motion passed.

The President has contacted the Childrens

"...Electronic Arts had seen
the error of their ways..."

Hospital and they requested a monitor and stand to hold their equipment. These will be purchased and given to the hospital this month.

Key System sysop Mike Sawley spoke on the new software that he is using on the KEY SYSTEM BBS. This new software "OASIS" fully supports both the 8 and 16 bit machines. Mike requested 16 bit uploads. New rules for the BBS will allow SLCC members only, from Friday evening till Sunday morning. Being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 10:30 PM. Respectfully Submitted

Jim Moran
Secretary

In your interstellar travels try :

**ALPHA
CENTARI
BBS**

F o R e M X E

(4 1 5) 2 2 2 - 2 8 5 8
3 0 0 / 1 2 0 0 b a u d

APRIL 1987

SAN LEANDRO COMPUTER CLUB

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1 THERE IS A LARGE MANY-LEGGED CREATURE ON YOUR SLEEVE.....	2	3	4
5	6	7 MAIN MEETING 8:00PM SAN LEANDRO PUBLIC LIBRARY	8	9	10	11
12	13 ST SIG 8:00 PM CALL BOB 352-8118	14 M/L SIG 8:00 PM CALL FRANK 471-8133	15 EXECUTIVE BOARD 8:00 PM CALL BOB 352-8118	16	17 JOURNAL DUE CALL BOB 865-1672	18
19	20	21 ATR8000 BBS SIG 8:00 PM CALL MIKE 482-5061	22 EDUCA- TION SIG 7:00 PM CALL LOIS 482-0674	23 BASIC SIG 8:00 PM CALL GUY 582-5561	24	25
26	27 ST SOFTWARE SIG 8:00 PM CALL BOB 352-8118	28 PASCAL SIG 7:00 PM CALL MIKE 570-7478 BUSINESS SIG 8:00 PM CALL CHUCK 632-1367	29	30		

The SLCC would like to thank Tom Allen of Allen Computer Graphics for doing the laser printing of this JOURNAL.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE -- VOTE !!

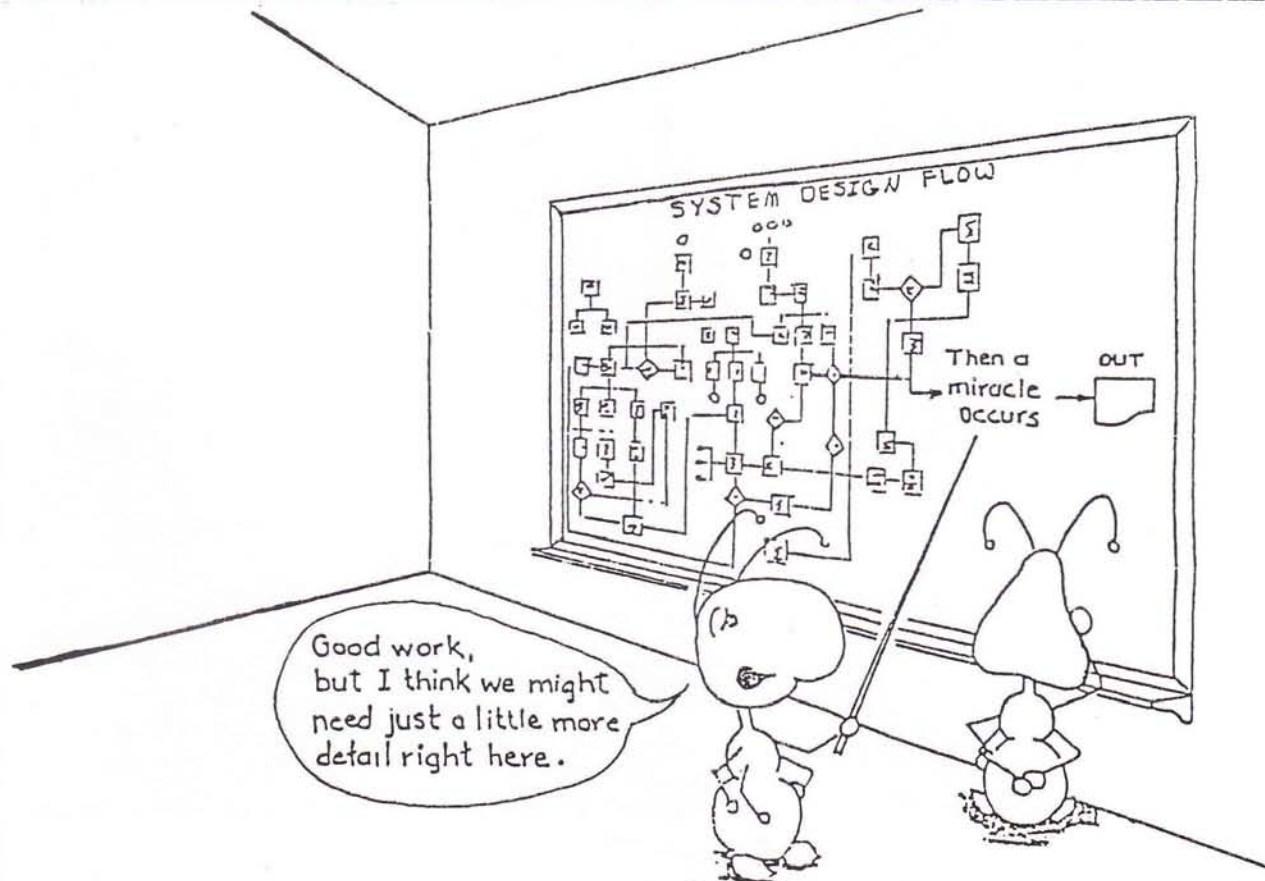
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Our thanks to the SLCC for all their help and support ! BBS :(415) 261-4813



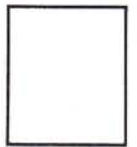
APRIL MEETING

April is POWER month ...

This month, the meeting will feature speakers and demonstrations on topics that span both new user interest and veteran experience. If schedules permit, John Russell will return with his 1 megabyte ICD MIO board for an extended demonstration of this truly revolutionary device for 8-bits. The term "power user" refers to those individuals who seek the fastest disk drive, largest memory space and highest clock speeds available for their computers. The MIO is a "power user" product as well as a cost effective multi-purpose device. Don't miss it !!

For those seeking the power of a high level, structured, programming language, we will have a presentation by Kyan Sopftware. They market a product for the Atari 8-bit machines that has been highly praised by all who use it, Kyan Pascal. Although many Atarians rely on good old Atari Basic for their programming needs, few would deny that there are many aspects of that language that could use some improvement. A large group of computer professionals, notably educators, feel that Pascal is the language of choice for serious work. Kyan Pascal is reported to be well suited to meet the needs of those Atari users. Great technical support and high standards make Kyan a must see demo. Be there !!

SLCC
JOURNAL



P.O. BOX 1506, SAN LEANDRO, CA 94577-0374

Next Meeting:

April 7, 1987 • 8 pm

San Leandro Community Library
300 Estudillo Ave

TO

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FIRST CLASS MAIL